

## A short history of Weather Forecast Office Aberdeen, South Dakota

The United States Weather Bureau opened a weather office in the Aberdeen, South Dakota, Airport Terminal building in June 1964. The office provided full-time services, including surface and upper air observations, to the Aberdeen Airport and surrounding communities. Budget reductions in 1978 led to staff and operations cuts. In July 1978, the Weather Service Office (WSO) Aberdeen staff of eight people was reduced to four, and services were provided on a limited duty basis.

WSO Aberdeen closed in September 1981 and the office was reopened a year later for 24-hour-a-day service during the week and limited duty on weekends. The station once again became a part-time, limited duty station in July 1986 with a staff of four people. WSO Aberdeen remained a limited duty station until the National Weather Service modernization of the 1990s. In February 1994, WSO Aberdeen resumed full-time, 24-hour operations in the Airport Terminal. The staff increased to 10 people to handle the increased responsibility.

In November 1994, the new modernized Weather Forecast Office building was completed on the east side of Aberdeen Regional Airport. WSO Aberdeen began operations in the new facility and as part of the agency's nationwide modernization effort. In the fall of 1998, WSO Aberdeen became a full-fledged forecast office and was renamed Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Aberdeen South Dakota. The staff in 1998 totaled 21 individuals: nine operational meteorologists, four hydro-meteorological technicians or interns, a three-member electronics staff, an administrative support assistant, a science officer, a warning co-ordination meteorologist, and data collection program manager, and a meteorologist-in-charge. The new County Warning and Forecast Area covered 26 counties in South Dakota and two counties in west-central Minnesota.

WFO Aberdeen produces weather warnings and advisories and daily forecasts for use by emergency managers, law enforcement, fire departments, aviation, media and the public. The WFO staff also takes twice-daily upper air observations and collects surface and remotely-sensed weather data. All of these data streams are provided to the public via an internet web page, and to the National Centers for Environmental Prediction for use in the national meteorological forecast models.

The mission of WFO Aberdeen is the protection of life and property of the people living and working in the office's area of responsibility in South Dakota and Minnesota.